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Dear Fulbrighters,

I'm extremely pleased to take on my new position as Counselor for Public Affairs in Hanoi at this exceptionally promising time in U.S.-Vietnam relations. Since my arrival in July, I have already had the pleasure of meeting some of you, and I look forward to meeting many more. This is my first opportunity to work directly with the Fulbright Program in over 22 years with the United States Information Agency and now the Department of State.

The Fulbright Program in Vietnam is one of the largest in the world. It is both highly regarded and observed with interest in Washington, DC. Before we established diplomatic relations, introduction of the Fulbright program was a major step toward normalizing U.S.-Vietnamese relations. Since then it has quickly grown and evolved to comprise all of the traditional elements of the Fulbright programs in other countries.

By upholding the high standards that have made the Fulbright one of the most prestigious international academic programs, we can continue to build the foundations of a diverse, long-term relationship between peoples and among institutions that can withstand the frictions and turbulence of the moment.

Working with our outstanding team of administrators here and in the United States, I will do whatever I can to ensure that each Fulbright scholar and student has the most appropriate placement and the most rewarding academic and personal experience possible. I will also strive to extend the support and services of the Fulbright program to all returned Fulbrighters.

Again, I look forward to meeting and getting to know all of you better in the coming months.

Best wishes,



David B. Monk
Counselor for Public Affairs
United States Embassy - Hanoi

FULBRIGHTER NEWS:

Hanoi Fulbrighters meet to discuss common grounds

Returned Fulbright scholars and students in Hanoi and surrounding areas met on August 12, to talk about their present careers and share their thoughts on the Fulbright Program. About 17 students and scholars attended the informal gathering, held at the Hilton Hanoi Opera, and enjoyed sharing stories about their Fulbright experience. "I enjoyed being able to talk with other Fulbrighters very much and think the Fulbright Program should organize more of these informal events," said Nguyen Son Hai, currently deputy director of the Harbourview in Hai Phong.

After some discussion, some attendees agreed that returned Fulbrighters can and should play a more active role in recruiting candidates. One company director, a returned Fulbright student, even asked if it was possible for him company to host fellow U.S. Fulbright scholars and students.

Dr. Tran Xuan Thao, Director of the Fulbright Program in Vietnam, encouraged all participants to make use of the services and support that the Fulbright Program provides for all past and present participants. Most importantly, Dr. Thao encouraged everyone to play a more active role in planning future Fulbright activities.

After the gathering, the Hilton Hanoi Opera was kind enough to offer free swimming pool use, and some Fulbrighters took advantage of the opportunity.

University representatives meet to evaluate Fulbright Scholar Program

On July 27, the Fulbright Program in Vietnam invited the representatives of Vietnamese universities that have hosted a U.S. Fulbright in the past for an overall evaluation of the Scholar Program. The evaluation session gave the university representatives an opportunity to discuss the opportunities the Fulbright Scholar Program presented to their universities and the challenges that, once addressed, can make the Program more effective.

The university directors recognized the invaluable expertise and resources that U.S. Fulbright Scholars brought to their institution. "The U.S. Fulbright scholar conducted research that allowed us to look at how we can restructure our educational system. It helped us gain a new perspective and we are grateful for his work," said a university director from Hue. The challenges that participants said needed to be addressed most are the language barriers that exist between the scholars and their institutions and better coordination of schedules for the university and the scholars.

"The evaluation was not only a good opportunity for the Fulbright Program office to receive feedback from the university directors, but was also a great chance for the university directors to learn from one another. Due to the success of this year's program and the recommendations from the participants, we plan to organize two evaluation sessions including one session with the participation of U.S. Fulbright scholars at mid-term," said Dr. Tran Xuan Thao, Director of Fulbright Program in Vietnam.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

What	Who	Where	When
Fulbright Orientation for U.S. Scholars and Students	New U.S. Fulbright Students and Scholars	Hanoi	September 8, 2000
Fulbright Reception	All Fulbrighters	HCMC	September 29, 2000
Application deadline for Fulbright Scholar Program, Academic Year 2001-2002	All eligible candidates	Hanoi	October 15, 2000

Your help needed - Searching for new television superstars

Do you know foreigners or overseas Vietnamese who are native speakers of American English? Vietnam Television is looking for a male and a female volunteer, native speakers of American English, to appear in its new program series entitled, "Learn Vietnamese by Television," targeted at foreigners and overseas Vietnamese. Volunteers would work about three hours once a week as presenters in English of grammatical, lexical, and cultural explanations, with some possibilities for acting if they would like to do so.

This is a great opportunity for your foreign friends to become an instant Vietnamese television star! If you are working with, or know of foreigners or overseas Vietnamese, please encourage them to take this opportunity of a life time by calling David Monk or Mr. Thuc at the Public Affairs Section of the United States Embassy in Hanoi, tel.: (04) 831-4580.

USEFUL INFORMATION:

HANOI:

U.S. Embassy
7 Lang Ha
Hanoi, Vietnam
Tel: (04) 843-1500
Fax: (04) 843-1510

Public Affairs Section -
Hanoi
6 Ngoc Khanh
Hanoi, Vietnam
Tel: (04) 831-4580
Fax: (04) 831-4601
Email: fulbrightvn@fpt.vn

HO CHI MINH CITY:

U.S. Consulate
4 Le Duan, District 1
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Tel: (08) 822-9433
Fax: (08) 822-9434

Public Affairs Section -
HCMC
9/F, Saigon Centre
65 Le Loi, District 1
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Tel: (08) 821-6400
Fax: (08) 821-6405

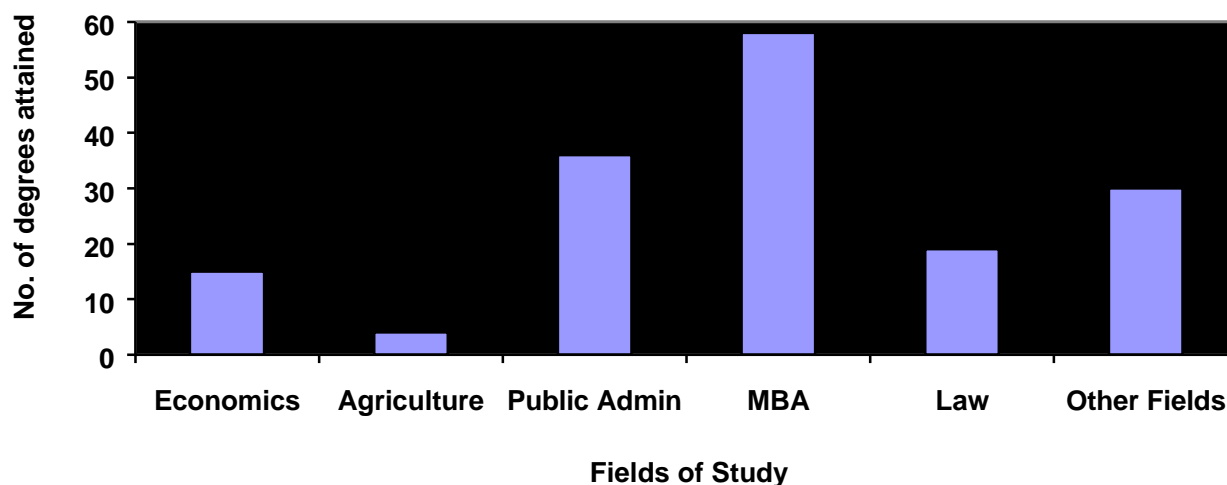
Fulbright Program Website:

<http://www.usembassy.state.gov/vietnam/www/hfhp.html>

FULBRIGHT FACTS:

The following are information on Vietnamese Fulbrighters and what and where they studied:

Vietnamese Fulbright Master's Degrees



* The "other fields " category includes international relations, education, public health, urban planning, environmental studies, resource management and intellectual property studies.

A sample of universities attended by Vietnamese Fulbright scholars and students:

Harvard	16	U. of Penn	8	Georgetown	6	Stanford	2
UC-Berkeley	3	Northwestern	2	U. of Indiana	5	U. of Michigan	3
Syracuse	10	Tufts	8	U. of Illinois	6	Columbia	7
Duke	3	Vanderbilt	6	Princeton	5	NYU	4

FROM YOU:

Have you moved recently? Please write your new contact details here and fax or email to PAS - Hanoi:
(04) 831-4601 or fulbrightvn@fpt.vn.

New Address: _____ New telephone: _____
 _____ New fax: _____
 _____ New E-mail: _____

FULBRIGHT UPDATES:

Seth Singleton holds discussion with Chinese and Russian experts, visits Mongolia

Seth Singleton, a U.S. Fulbright scholar who was lecturing and consulting at Hue University, was provided with a Fulbright grant to attend a conference in China and do a study tour of Mongolia.

"In late May, thanks to the Fulbright Program, I traveled to Beijing and to Ulaanbaatar, capital of Mongolia, to talk about international affairs, taking a break from my work in university development in Hue.

The Beijing meeting was a three-country conference, China, Russia, and the United States, organized by the China Institute of International Studies and the U.S. Embassy. The idea was to have a cooperative discussion of policy issues at a tense and fragile time between the United States and China, bringing Russian experts into the conversation. We were all told to avoid taking positions and scoring points, which was all for the good. Chinese experts were cordial and highly informed (one turned out to be a former colleague at Harvard). Chinese presentations followed government views, but in comments and conversations, ideas were flexible. The Russians were relaxed and humorous, and had a lot to say about their own country (not all of it favorable—Russia *is* a democracy these days) and made astute comments about the other countries. The meeting began on the day the U.S. House of Representatives passed the bill for normal trade relations with China, which set the right tone. My job, one of two presentations from the American side, was to analyze how U.S. internal politics affects policy toward China and Russia. It's fun but frustrating to try and explain the United States with its hundreds of interest groups, local interests, disorganized political parties, and divided but powerful public opinion, all pulling and tugging at the government, which is itself divided between the many factions in Congress and the President. The American system seems chaotic until one runs up against its bedrock of common sense.

Mongolia turned out to be a fascinating country. In scenery and climate, it is entirely different from Vietnam, but familiar to anyone who has spent time in Montana, Wyoming, or Nevada – big blue sky, long open grassy valleys dotted with animals, distant snowy mountains with rivers running down to hills and valleys and the desert. Days are warm, but in early June, nights are cool as the temperature drops in the dry air after sunset. After Hue, *dry* weather was nice. Ulaanbaatar seemed like a Siberian Russian city: massive government architecture (with a now closed mausoleum for party leader Choibalsan in a huge plaza, like Lenin's in Red Square); blocks of flats, barren on the outside but probably very nice within; huge inefficient power plants supplying the city with heat through above-ground pipes wrapped with ragged insulation. Mongolia was developed for almost seventy years (1923-90) with Soviet subsidies, and when these ended, the economy dived. Many factories are now closed. Unemployment is high and people have been moving from cities back to the countryside. This past year, a harsh winter killed many animals. (Mongolia has almost ten times as many animals – over 20 million – as people.) No surprise that the opposition – in this case the former communist Party, the MPRP – won this month's elections. Despite the present hardship, Mongolia is a proud country and culture, Asian in origin but distinctive, like Vietnam. Lamaist Buddhism, and contacts with Tibet and with the Dalai Lama, remain strong; a visit to the Gandan monastery where sacred manuscripts are kept was a highlight of the visit."

FULBRIGHT FEATURE:**Bach Tan Sinh and family returns to Vietnam with fond Fulbright memories**

The following article was written by Bach Tan Sinh, a Vietnamese Fulbright Scholar who researched at the Energy and Resources Group of the University of California-Berkeley. Sinh and his family will be returning to Hanoi in late August.

"In December 1998, after defending my Ph.D. thesis in Denmark, I returned to Hanoi with a dream that I could again go abroad to continue my research. My day-to-day involvement and responsibility at work prevented me from focusing on my research. In addition, the poor research conditions in Vietnam made it impossible for me to advance my research interests in the field of environmental politics and sociology. Then the opportunity arrived when I received a letter from the Fulbright Program in Vietnam in February 1999, informing me that there was a possibility for doctoral researchers to obtain support from the Fulbright Program to conduct their post-doctoral research in the United States. I applied and waited. I still remember the day when I received the good news in May 1999, that the selection committee had accepted my application. My dream came true. My wife, two daughters and I believed that we could all benefit from the trip and so we decided to go as a family at the end of September 1999.

Berkeley was selected as our destination partly because of its popularity with the student movement during the 1970s. Another other reason we decided on Berkeley was the highly reputable University of California at Berkeley and its faculty - the Energy and Resources Group (ERG) - which I have had a chance to visit briefly in November 1997, on the way to attend the conference. Last but not least, Berkeley is near the San Francisco Bay area where the environment is beautiful and charming.

During my research visit at ERG what I very much enjoy is the open academic environment among the faculty. I did not only benefit from being in touch with my faculty associate but also participating in a number of seminars, workshops and courses with graduate students. The Environmental Sociology course organised by ERG for doctoral students provided me a solid theoretical basis for my future research. The excellent library facilities at UCB have provided me access to many interesting and important literatures and I was able to conduct a detailed literature review, which is very important for my future research in Vietnam.

My wife Tuong Anh found the experience very beneficial because she had a chance to learn about America, improve her English language skills and befriended many friends from different parts of the world. My two daughters Linh and Thao loved going to school here. Both of them made many good friends. In addition to the knowledge acquired at school, they learn to appreciate and respect other cultures, and especially think independently. They will miss the school in California.

We were also fortunate to have a chance to participate in a number of interesting meetings and excursions organised by the Fulbright Enrichment Program. The program provides excellent opportunities for Fulbrighters to know each other and enhances the understanding about their cultures.

Now at the end of our stay in the United States, each one of us feels that we had enjoyed and contributed in one way or another to the goal of the Fulbright Program—promoting mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries. We will bring back with us to Vietnam memories of beautiful California and Berkeley, friendly and helpful people we met, an open society with warm a culture and friendly mentality that we very much enjoy and respect."